

Public Affairs 878

Semester I, 2008-2009

Paul R. Soglin

Syllabus

Office hours: Thursday 9:00-10:45 am  
psoglin@lafollette.wisc.edu

## Public Management

Effective public management requires considerable skill and knowledge. It is necessary for individuals to develop effective practices to lead, coach, and manage the organization. The human and financial resources of public agencies are limited. Through better management agencies will achieve their policy goals.

This course covers three facets of public management.

- *Sketch the values that shape public affairs.* Policy makers, public managers, and citizens hold equity, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, and accountability in high esteem. Achieving any of them is difficult. Achieving all may be nothing more than an admirable goal. We will examine the competing forces shaping the pursuit of values in public affairs and how this competition shapes public policy.
- *Examine the fundamental theories shaping administrative behavior.* Implementation of policy is public management. We will examine the theories that shape how people think about and do the business of government.
- *Apply the course material.* We will use case studies during the course to augment the text material. We will examine real problems that emerged in the federal, state and local governments in recent years.

This course recognizes the creative dimensions of public management as well as lessons learned from success in the private sector. We will learn both through an examination of relevant literature and through observation and participation, how specific individual and agencies practice their management in the public service.

## Exams and Papers and Other Requirements

Students are expected to attend all classes, to read materials relevant to each session, and to participate in discussions, voluntary or otherwise. The course grade will be determined as follows:

- **General participation** in class discussions **10%**
- **Analysis of the reading. 10%**  
For each week, two students will sign up to lead the opening discussion on a section of the reading material. No later than 11:00 PM on the Tuesday prior to presentation, the students will email to their classmates and me an analysis, no

more than 1200 words, of key issues in the reading. As with the Management Plan, your class presentation and lead in the discussion is part of your grade.

- **Management Plan. 40%** Each student will develop a plan for what he or she would do during the first 90 days on the job if you were appointed to head a particular public agency. The intent of this assignment is to provide a focus for the various topics that we will cover in the course and to apply organizational analysis, strategic management and leadership strategies to a specific case. You should have your agency selected and discussed with me no later than September 18. Due date is December 18, 2008

We will draw straws for oral presentation dates for the last five class periods. You will have a total 40 minutes for your presentation and to respond to questions and criticism from the class. It is strongly recommended that your presentation be no longer than 20 minutes, preferably 15 minutes. In the real world, the ability to present a coherent recommendation, concisely, is an expected management skill.

- **Budgeting paper.** Identify two current budget issues in state or local government, one of which is consistent with best practices, one that is not. 5-6 pages Due October 9, 2008. **20%.**
- **Paper on bureaucracy based on the readings.** Specifics will be provided in class. Due November 6, 2008 **20%**

### **Rescheduled Classes**

Once during the course of the semester it may be necessary for me to be out of town on a class day. On the first day of class we will identify one future two hour period during the semester to use as a back up, should this occur. My thanks to Professors Dennis Dresang and Susan Yackee for their assistance in providing materials and advice for this course.

## Readings

Required:

Daniel Kemmis, *Community and the Politics of Place*

Anne M. Khademian, *Working with Culture*

Arthur Okun, *Equality and Efficiency: The Big Tradeoff*

James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy*

Assigned reading available from the **Copy Center in Room 6120 Social Science**.

Obtain this material well before the first day of class – it contains readings for the first class.

## Course Outline

**September 4** Introduction and Overview.

Wilson Chapters 1-2

Daniel Kemmis, entire

Woodrow Wilson and Max Weber from readings

Public Management

Case- *Ruckelshaus and the EPA* readings

**September 11** Budgeting

*Local Budgeting* readings

*GFOA –Recommended Budget Practices and attached articles* readings

**September 18** Government or private sector?

Okun, entire

Bureaucracy Despised, Disparaged, and Defended -readings

Case *Commute Partnerships*

Read *Organizing Competition in Indianapolis* for reference but we will not discuss it until November 6.

**September 25** Organizational Culture

Khademian, entire

Case *Denise Fleury and the Minnesota Office of State Claims* 7

**October 2** Beliefs, Values and Culture

Wilson Chapters 3-6

Case *Marie Nicole Thompson*

**October 9** Managing for Change

Wilson, Chapters 7-9

Lynn, *Public Management* readings

Case *Registry of Motor Vehicles – Watertown*

Budgeting paper due

- October 16** Are There Rules for Managing?  
Budgeting paper due  
Wilson Chapters 10-12  
*Case Improving Decision Making and Patron Service in the King County Library System*
- October 23** The Bureaucratic View  
Wilson Chapters 13-16  
*Street Level Bureaucracy* – readings  
Case - *COPS*
- October 30** *Case Improving Decision Making and Patron Service in the KCLS Parts B&C*
- November 6** How do we best serve the public?  
Wilson Chapters 17-20  
*Miranda* readings  
Case -*Labor-Management Cooperation at the Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation*  
Bureaucracy paper due.
- November 13** Case -*Organizing Competition in Indianapolis*
- November 20** Presentations Tara; Lilly
- December 4** Presentations Peter; Allison; Martha
- December 11** Presentations Joe; Sam

### Guidelines for Management Plan Assignment

The purpose of the Management Plan is to discuss what you would do if you were appointed to head the public agency or nonprofit organization that you have selected for this assignment. The pedagogical intent is to provide an opportunity for you to integrate and synthesize much of the material that we are covering during the semester.

Please follow the outline below.

- I. Describe the organization and its challenges
  - a. Basic characteristics
    - i. Mission
    - ii. Authorizing environment
    - iii. Structure
    - iv. Size and nature of workforce
    - v. Size of budget and source of funds
  - b. Organizational culture
  - c. Productivity and performance indicators
  - d. Human resource management system or approach
  - e. Budget system or approach
  - f. Problems
    - i. General?
    - ii. How would you analyze or diagnose potential problems in a detailed, specific manner?
- II. Your goals
  - a. Long-term
  - b. Within 90 day period
- III. Your strategy (limit to first 90 days)
  - a. Relate to your leadership style
  - b. Indicate how you will know whether you have achieved your goals

This should be 15-20 pages, double-spaced, in length.

Due: December 18, 2008

## Public Affairs 878

### Guidelines for Case Analyses

1. What's the story? What's the problem?
2. Who are the main characters and what are their goals?
3. Where is control over the key variables?
  - a. Who?
  - b. Unified or diffuse?
4. What are the arguments for and against options?
  - a. Substantive?
  - b. Political?
  - c. Administrative?
5. What are the general lessons? How does this relate to the conceptual readings?